



The Old Ironsides Report

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Soldier's Family Reunites in Baghdad

**Story and photo by Sgt. Mark S. Rickert
372nd MPAD**

BAGHDAD, Iraq – When their plane touched down in Damascus, Syria, Teresa and Lateef Al-Saraji met with a friend there who had waited there on the hood of his run-down taxicab. The car didn't look promising, and the curtains hanging over the windows to conceal its cargo brought the dangers into perspective. They had a long drive ahead of them, and getting past the Syrian border wasn't going to be easy.

They crossed into Iraq and moved on toward Baghdad, but the trip was no joy ride. The car coughed and sputtered most of the time. There weren't many gas stations along the way to refuel the car, and it was too dangerous for the passengers to get out and stretch their legs.

Even with odds stacked against them, the couple finally arrived safely in Baghdad.

It must have seemed strange to the 1st Armored Division soldiers at Camp Ultimo when fellow soldier Sgt. Kristin L. Cruikshank, a food preparation specialist with the 16th Engineer Battalion of the 1st Armored Division, met her mother and stepfather at the front gates of the camp.

So what prompts a mother and stepfather to risk their lives for a family reunion? For Sgt. Cruikshank's family, there were many reasons. It all began 13 years ago, while Cruikshank's mother was having lunch at a restaurant in Columbus, Ohio. There, Teresa met Iraqi refugee Lateef Al-Saraji while he bussed tables. Lateef had fled Iraq during the first Gulf War, and got the job shortly after coming to America.

Teresa and Lateef soon married, and for the next decade, Lateef could visit Iraq only in his dreams. Because of Saddam Hussein's border policy for refugees, Lateef thought that he would never see his family again. That all changed when his stepdaughter's unit of the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division moved into Baghdad.

When Cruikshank arrived in theater, she took the opportunity to meet with the family she'd seen only in pictures. She met with an interpreter, and gave him a phone number where her in-laws in Baghdad could be found. Only a day later, Cruikshank's Iraqi relatives came to the camp to see her.

So, while Cruikshank's parents negotiated the sandy dunes of Iraq's red-zones, she and her newfound family sat in a quiet room on camp, trying to communicate with each other. The translator could stay only a short while, leaving Cruikshank and her Iraqi relatives to twiddle their thumbs, groping for a word or a gesture that the other would understand.

"The interpreter couldn't stay long," Cruikshank said. "So, after he left, we spent hours struggling to communicate."

Finally, after picking through a translator's dictionary, they learned that they could communicate better through pictures, and soon they were taking turns with a notepad and a pencil, playing a primitive game of Pictionary.

"We drew all kinds of pictures," said Cruikshank, laughing at the thought. "That worked a lot better than the dictionary."

By the time Cruikshank's mother and stepfather arrived, she and her Iraqi relatives were well acquainted. When they all met at the front gates, the rest of the camp watched in amazement.

"When I saw her, I hugged her, and I didn't want to let go," said Teresa. "The soldiers just watched us with their mouths hanging open."

"I felt that they've been watching over her and protecting her," said Teresa. "I was really scared when I found out that Kristin was going to Iraq. But when I learned that the family was close, it made me feel a lot better."



Sgt. Kristin L. Cruikshank, a food preparation specialist with the 16th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, stands with her family at the family shop in Camp Ultimo, Baghdad.

Now, after a decade of strife, the Al-Saraji family is together for the very first time. For Lateef, things couldn't get much better. "It's like a dream come true," he said. "I think I'm still in shock."

The reunion won't last forever, and Cruikshank will have to say goodbye to her mother and stepfather soon. As for the rest of her family—they'll be sticking close together. Thanks to some string pulling by Cruikshank, her Iraqi family has a shop set up at Camp Ultimo.

"I'm glad that they're watching out for her," said Teresa. "I feel like they can protect her here and keep her safe. It makes me feel better, knowing that my family is close together."

A Smart Tip From 1AD Safety

SLIPS, TRIPS, AND FALLS

A soldier was standing on a top of a water tower filling it with water when the tower collapsed. The soldier fell to the ground and received minor injuries, but this incident could have caused a serious injury.

Personnel Must:

- ✓ Ensure tower or platform is stable
- ✓ Ensure steps are secure and free of obstacles
- ✓ Mark walking hazards (i.e. holes, guide wires, tent stakes)
- ✓ Stay alert when walking or dismounting vehicles
- ✓ Carry and use your flashlight at night

NEWS

Bush Visits 3rd Infantry Division Troops

FORT STEWART, Ga. - President Bush saluted the Army's 3rd Infantry that stormed Baghdad and ousted Saddam Hussein's regime, telling the troops on Friday: "You made history. You made our nation proud." Members of the 3rd Infantry, which suffered more casualties than any other American military division in Iraq, stood at attention in desert fatigues and black berets as Bush strode onto a stage at Fort Stewart. There, an estimated 15,000 troops, families and area citizens burst into cheers. The troops repeatedly yelled "hoo-ah," a universal Army response, in approval of Bush's message.

U.N. Votes to Lift Sanctions on Libya

UNITED NATIONS (AP) - The U.N. Security Council voted Friday to lift 11-year-old sanctions against Libya, with the United States and France abstaining. A partial agreement between Libya and relatives of the victims of a 1989 French airliner bombing on Thursday cleared the way for the long delayed vote which was eagerly sought by Moammar Gadhafi's government.

Atomic Board Gives Iran Oct. 31 Deadline

VIENNA, Austria (AP) - The U.N. atomic agency board on Friday gave Iran until the end of October to disprove suspicions about its nuclear program, setting the stage for possible U.N. Security Council action if it doesn't comply. Iran's delegation walked out of the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors meeting in protest after a resolution containing the deadline passed. Iranian officials had repeatedly warned that imposing a deadline would aggravate nuclear tensions.

'Three's Company' Star John Ritter Dies

LOS ANGELES (AP) - John Ritter, whose portrayal of the bumbling but lovable Jack Tripper helped make the madcap comedy series "Three's Company" a smash hit in the 1970s, died of a heart problem after falling ill on the set of his new TV sitcom. He was 54. Ritter became ill Thursday while working on ABC's "8 Simple Rules ... For Dating My Teenage Daughter," said Susan Wilcox, his assistant of 22 years. The show became Ritter's TV comeback vehicle.

Music Legend Johnny Cash Dies at 71

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) -- Johnny Cash, "The Man in Black" who became a towering figure in American music with such hits as "Folsom Prison Blues," "I Walk the Line" and "A Boy Named Sue," died Friday. He was 71.

Cash died of complications from diabetes that resulted in respiratory failure, his manager, Lou Robin, said in a statement issued by Baptist Hospital in Nashville. Cash died at the hospital at 3 a.m. EDT.

Cash had been released from the hospital Wednesday after a two-week stay for treatment of an unspecified stomach ailment. The illness caused him to miss last month's MTV Video Music Awards, where he had been nominated in seven categories. He won one award for the video "Hurt," a reflection on mortality that showed his brittle health.

Cash's deeply lined face fit well with his unsteady voice, which was limited in range but used to great effect to sing about prisoners, heartaches and tales of everyday life. Cash said in his 1997 autobiography "Cash" that he tried to speak for "voices that were ignored or even suppressed in the entertainment media, not to mention the political and educational establishments." His career spanned generations, with each finding something of value in



his simple records, many of which used his trademark rockabilly rhythm. "His influence spread over many generations of different people," said Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger. "I loved him as singer and a writer. I remember years ago a big part of our repertoire was two of my favorite Johnny Cash songs, 'I Walk The Line' and 'Ballad Of A Teenage Queen.'"

Elvis Costello, who once recorded with Cash, called him "a great, great man. ... He made me feel very welcome in his home and I will never forget that."

Cash won 11 Grammy Awards - most recently in 2003, when "Give My Love To Rose" earned him honors as best male country vocal performance - and numerous Country Music Association awards. He was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1980 and inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1992.

The late 1960s and '70s were Cash's peak commercial years, and he was host of his own ABC variety show from 1969-71. In later years, he was part of the Highwayman supergroup with Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson and Kristofferson. In the 1990s, Cash found a new artistic life recording with rap and hard rock producer Rick Rubin on the label American Recordings. And he was back on the charts in with the 2002 album "American IV: the Man Comes Around."

Most recently, Cash was recognized for his cover of the Nine Inch Nails song "Hurt." He had hoped to attend the MTV Video Music Awards, where the video won for best cinematography, but he was hospitalized.

In his 1971 hit "Man in Black," Cash said his black clothing symbolized the downtrodden people in the world. Cash had been "The Man in Black" since he joined the Grand Ole Opry at age 25.

John R. Cash was born Feb. 26, 1932, in Kingsland, Ark., one of seven children. When he was 12, his 14-year-old brother and hero, Jack, died after an accident while sawing oak trees into fence posts. The tragedy had a lasting impact on Cash, and he later pointed to it as a possible reason his music was frequently melancholy.

Cash launched his career in Memphis, performing on radio station KWEM. He auditioned with Sun Records, ultimately recording the single "Hey Porter," which became a hit.

"Folsom Prison Blues" went to No. 4 on the country charts in 1956 and featured Cash's most famous couplet: "I shot a man in Reno/ just to watch him die."

Because of Cash's frequent performances in prisons and his rowdy lifestyle early in his career, many people wrongly thought he had served prison time. He never did, though he battled addictions to pills on and off throughout his life. He blamed fame for his vulnerability to drug addiction.

Cash once credited his mother, Carrie Rivers Cash, with encouraging him to pursue a singing career. "My mother told me to keep on singing, and that kept me working through the cotton fields. She said God has his hand on you. You'll be singing for the world someday."

And Now, a Word from CID...

**Thinking of taking an Iraqi weapon home?
Forgetaboutit.**

Security measures at Baghdad International Airport have been beefed up and new security equipment and procedures have been put into place, according to Edward Mize, special agent in charge of the 323rd Military Police Detachment (Criminal Investigation Detachment) at the airport.

The CID office in Baghdad is conducting a crime prevention survey investigation concerning the airport's passenger and cargo terminal areas. This investigation was started because of several reports of weapons, explosives and other contraband items leaving the Baghdad International Airport, which is called "BIAP" by many soldiers based in Baghdad.

The U.S. Army CID is working closely with the Air Force, U.S. Customs and local commanders to increase security and pursue offenders.

The improved security measures include: X-ray machines that can scan anything from wallet-size to pallet-size packages; increased K-9 military working dog "bomb sniffing" searches, which can detect smokeless powder residue on weapons; and increased random physical searches of personal and unit property.

If illegal items are found, criminal charges, to include federal charges, will be pursued, Mize said.

"Force protection is everyone's concern," Mize added, "and unstable explosives, to include smoke and illumination rounds, are a safety issue, especially onboard aircraft, and even more so on aircraft with passengers."

Anyone having information concerning the smuggling of contraband or any other criminal activity should notify their chain of command, Military Police or the CID immediately, he said. The DNVF phone number for CID is 551-9413.

Chaplain's Thought of the Day **The Path of Wisdom**

Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you.
--Proverbs 4:25

I had always heard that if a farmer keeps his eyes on a distant object while he's plowing, he'll make a straight furrow. So I tested the principle when I mowed my lawn. Sure enough, my first cut was a straight swath of new-mown turf. If you can plow a straight furrow or mow in a straight line by keeping your eyes fixed on a distant object, surely the principle should also be true of life--especially if the object on which you fix your gaze is the same yesterday, today, and forever. That's what the writer of the Proverbs says in chapter 4. In fact, the whole book of Proverbs is about following a straight path.

Our wisdom is folly unless our eyes are on God.

SPORTS

Pistons Sign Top Draft Pick Darko Milicic

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. (AP) - First-round draft pick Darko Milicic signed a contract with the Detroit Pistons and was to be officially introduced Friday. Detroit drafted the 7-foot, 245-pound Milicic with the second choice in June's draft. The 18-year-old Milicic, from Serbia and Montenegro, has played professionally in Europe since he was 14.

Oddly Enough...

Man's Plans for Alibi Foiled by Mail

PITTSBURGH (AP) -- A man who thought he had hatched a perfect alibi to charges that he murdered a man in a barroom shooting two years ago had his scheme foiled when a letter asking a friend to lie for him was returned and was read by jail guards. Demetrius Murrell, 24, of Pittsburgh, pleaded guilty Thursday to a charge of third-degree murder after prosecutors read the letter in court. In the letter, Murrell asked his friend for "a little alibi" during his upcoming trial on charges that he shot and killed a 19-year-old man in a Pittsburgh bar on March 24, 2001. "Really, I'm home free. Or almost. I need you to come and say you were there and that you know it wasn't me," Murrell wrote in the letter. Murrell also sought testimony that the shooter was "a lil' bit taller than me and he was darker." But his friend never got the letter. Murrell apparently had an incorrect address and not enough postage, so the letter was returned to the Allegheny County Jail - where it was read by jail guards. In exchange for his plea, Murrell could be sentenced to as much as eight years in prison. Robert Mielnicki, Murrell's attorney, seemed resigned about the result. "This was a case with many, many issues, and I think sometimes this is the way cases have to be resolved," he said.

This Day in History **September 13th 1971**

The four-day revolt at the maximum-security Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo, New York, ends when hundreds of state police officers storm the complex in a hail of gunfire. Thirty-nine people were killed in the disastrous assault, including 29 prisoners and 10 prison guards and employees held hostage since the outset of the ordeal. On the morning of September 13 helicopters flew over the yard, dropping tear gas as state police and corrections officers stormed in with guns blazing. The police fired 3,000 rounds into the tear gas haze, killing 29 inmates and 10 of the hostages and wounding 89. Most were shot in the initial indiscriminate barrage of gunfire, but other prisoners were shot or killed after they surrendered. In the aftermath of the bloody raid, authorities said that the inmates had killed the slain hostages however autopsies showed that these charges were false and that all 10 hostages had been shot to death by police. The Attica riot was the worst prison riot in U.S. history.

Source: historychannel.com



TASK FORCE 1ST ARMORED DIVISION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICE



La Pinata

Celebrate!

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

IS BEING OBSERVED FROM 15 SEP 03
TO 15 OCT 03

THIS YEAR THE THEME IS:

Hispanic Americans: Honoring our Past,
Surpassing Our Present, and Leading Our
Future.



PINATA PARTY AT BIAP

COME OUT TO THE CELEBRATION OF
THE HISPANIC AMERICAN FESTIVITIES
ON 03 OCT 03 AT BIAP

- 0630 – 0730 5K RUN / WALK Starting at 4th BDE area. The first 800 hundred to finish the run/walk will receive a free t-shirt.
- 1130 to 1300 Join us at the DFAC to eat Hispanic food and hear our great guest speaker.
- 1900 – 2200 Let's celebrate the Hispanic Heritage Month with a Pinata Party! Where the 1AD Band and DJ will enlighten the night. At the same time, let's have some fun breaking pinatas full of candy!

POC IS 1AD E0 Office 551-9109

BIAP MOVIE THEATER

LOCATED IN THE SOLDIER SUPPORT
CENTER. A MOVIE IS SHOWN NIGHTLY
AT 20:00

28 SEP FRIDA

29 SEP SELENA

30 SEP DANCE WITH ME

01 OCT TORTILLA SOUP

02 OCT STAND AND DELIVER

03 OCT EVITA

04 OCT AMORES PERROS (Subtitles in English)

